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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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THE

CHRISTIAN USE OF THE TONGUE.

"And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."—Col. iii. 17.

He who accepts the thought that the whole apparatus of religion, as revealed and set forth in the New Testament, is an instrument for the development of a perfect manhood in Christ Jesus, will be struck, in the light of that view, and on further examination, with the details, the finishing touches which are put upon the portraiture of that goodness which men are to work out and maintain in themselves.

It is a fact that there are great truths, the knowledge of which is indispensable to a large Christian experience. It is also a fact that men are apt to suppose that if large views of truth are presented concerning the eternal sphere, there will flow out of the knowledge and faith of these great truths the details of a Christian life. So the apostles did not think. While they abundantly labored, and developed the theory of the divine nature and government to a certain extent, and especially while they developed those personal relations which the soul of man is to sustain through Jesus Christ to the Father, the particularity with which they then went on to teach us how to apply these great truths to every phase of practical life, is one of the most remarkable features of the New Testament; and I confess that I read with continued and ever-growing surprise the commands that have respect to what may be called the minor points of Christian life.

A great many things are taught in the family, and should be, that are very seldom taught in the pulpit. A great many things

SUNDAY EVENING, June 15, 1873. LESSON: 2 Titus iii. 1-8. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection) Nos. 607, 644, 657.

are taught in the New Testament which we almost never hear enjoined in the pulpit. What are called the minor morals of life are, to a very limited extent, matters of pulpit prelection.

I propose, to-night, to set forth some few of the points which it is usually supposed to be the business of parents to teach, and which I shall enjoin upon the young, for the sake of corroborating the instructions which they receive in the family. Sometimes children and young persons feel that the iteration of truths by father and mother is irksome; but when the same truths are uttered in the sanctuary, when it is shown that the very precepts of which they are so often reminded are mentioned also in Scripture, are insisted upon there, and are a part of religious truth, they frequently receive an impulse, and have an interest in them which they never did while they considered them as simple matters of domestic instruction.

I should be glad, furthermore, to produce the impression that Christian people do not represent true Christianity by virtue simply of faith in Christ, without abundant good works, without a beautiful life.

The first element of such a life, which is a complex one, and is far larger than I can even allude to, much less exhaust, to-night: it is the matter of speech, and the Christian duties which belong to the use of the tongue.

There is, I think, no other source of suffering or of enjoyment so fruitful as the wrong or the right use of the gift of speech. I have sometimes thought that there was no music and no pleasure greater than that afforded by a sweet disposition uttered sweetly through the tongue. On the other hand, I have thought that the greatest blessing that could befall men would be to be dumb or to be deaf, one or the other. The tongue is a fountain of good—a cloud dropping down perpetual richness: the tongue is a nettle, a scourge, a torment.

The management of the tongue is declared to be equivalent to the sum-total of Christian grace. It is taught that a man who governs his tongue is a perfect man. That is to say, if a man govern his tongue, there is nothing that he cannot do. And when you consider how much men are mixed up in life, and how incessantly the temptation to speak is brought to bear upon them; when you consider how much there is in speech, and that the tongue is only the instrument of that which lies behind it and above it, and that all the feelings try to utter themselves; when you consider in what ways the feelings rise up in the hearts of men; how, day in and day out, men are talking, and talking, and talking, either malignly or

benignly, either through the reason or the imagination, quickened by mirthfulness, and humor, and kindness, or sharply, critically, uncharitably, then you begin to get some idea of what a harvest is sowed by the tongue. You begin to have some hint of the vastness of the field in which it operates, and of the endlessness of its fruit; to have a feeble conception of how much pleasure and how much misery is caused by it. It is a fire that warms men: it is a brand whose sparks, when it is shaken, burn men. It draws men like music; or it drives men like a scourge. And even the apostle wondered how one fountain could send forth bitter waters and sweet, not at the same time, but in such close succession, as seems to be the case with this one spring.

According to Scripture, it is the duty of every Christian man to order his conversation in such a way as to say something. Hundreds of persons, in the family, and in their intercourse with men, talk all day, and scarcely utter anything that is worth remembering. There are many people who indulge in empty talk; talk on empty themes; talk of things transient; talk of unimportant things—or worse than that.

Now, it is an explicit command of the Word of God that men should talk *to edification*. Their conversation is to be seasoned. Nothing is so vapid as food without salt, unless it be talk that has no wisdom in it. It is as much a command of Scripture that men should use their tongues for edification, as that they should be righteous or holy. No man can do this, if he does not feel bound in conscience to take heed thereto. How few of you ever make your conversation the subject of thought or study! How seldom do parents, when they come to the morning, noon, or evening meal, feel that their conversation is a part of the birthright and education of their children! How few persons take pains to select profitable topics of conversation! How poor is the conversation of men! And yet, how rich it might be! For every man knows some things better than anybody else around him knows them. There is light given to every man. His peculiar disposition, the special combination of his faculties, the particular line of experience which has been developed in him, gives to each person some things that cannot well be found anywhere else; and every man should make his contribution to conversational wisdom.

In marked contrast with this, is that conversation which is not only vapid and useless, but, still more, mischievous; which detracts from the happiness of life; which sows the seeds of suspicion; which quickens in man all those malign tendencies which are already too strong, and need no whetting by conversation.

Under this head, also, comes the use of the tongue for recriminations, and for *brawling*, as the Scripture hath it; the use of the tongue to irritate, to annoy, to brow-beat, to spread mischief among friends; the use of the tongue as a surgeon's knife, to cut up the absent; the use of the tongue to spread all manner of evil; the use of the tongue as a sower of thorns and of briars.

There are many persons who think they are Christians because they have had an experience; but they do not feel it to be their Christian duty to use their tongues according to the law of kindness. Nor do they think, in the confession of their sins, to confess that, day in and day out, they are making somebody unhappy by the manner in which they use that member.

There are thousands who, when they see what mischief they have done with their tongues, say, "Oh! I did not mean to do any hurt." They scatter firebrands and arrows and death, and then plead that they did not intend any harm! As if a man, sitting in his window, should fire his rifle out along the crowded street, and then, when report was brought to him that this child was shot, that woman slain, and this man wounded, should say, "Well, well, I really did not mean to hurt anybody," so men go on firing this *mitrailleuse* of the mouth; and when a knowledge of the havoc which they are making comes to them, they say, "Well, I was a little careless with my tongue, to be sure; but I did not mean any harm."

There are other ways in which we are to employ the tongue as an instrument of kindness. It seems to me that, in this democratic country, we carry the idea of intellectual independence to such an extent that we are in danger of losing out of society many of those thousand little services which do not increase our care, which it is no burden to perform, and which add very much to the comfort of life.

We are, in human society, giving and taking; and every man owes all that he can contribute to make the way of human life a happy way. One of the methods of doing this is salutation. I was struck, when traveling in Europe, with the courtesy which I saw in German families. I was struck, in Paris, with the difference between the habits of the people there and our habits, in regard to salutations. On entering a French shop, I was expected to pay my respects to the woman, who sat a little removed from the door, and also to the person that served me. In other words, I was expected to be a *gentleman*. But we go in and out of our American stores gruff, asking simply for what we want, saying *Good-morning* to nobody, saying *Good-bye* to nobody, and thinking of nobody.

It seems a small thing, if a man goes into a store to buy any article, to be polite to those wait on him there. Kindly salutations whenever and wherever you meet men, often do them a great deal of good. Though they may amount to very little to some people, they amount to a great deal to others.

I one day met a plain man whom I had known well, and stopped to shake hands with him, and he said, "You do not know how much good this does me, and men like me. I shall go home and tell my wife and children of it, and it will be two or three days' happiness to us." Few men of rank and station, who are honored and respected in the community, know how many men in society can be made happy simply by their attention.

Let me speak of one of my early friends—Governor Noble, of Indiana. He had just the right name. A *noble* man he was. I was very much struck with the fact that whenever he met me, if it was twenty times a day, he invariably shook hands with me, and invariably said some little kind thing to me. And he did not do it because I was a minister. I have seen him do the same thing to poor old Tom, who was crippled by rheumatism. He did it to the plainest working men. It was his habit. He always carried courtesy along with him; he saluted men whenever he met them; and he had the same kindly word of recognition for all.

Now, I know a thing of this sort once is a little, and twice is a little; but where it is followed up for a whole life-time, it is a great treasure and comfort. Many a man would rather have one cheerful, kind saluting word, than to have money, or to have any more substantial favor done to him.

And where all men are doing this, how the air becomes rich and ripe with enjoyment! Our hard, barren, unsympathizing, unsaluting way is to be corrected. We are not enough given to Christian courtesy. Try it a little while. Salute the aged. Say kindly things to those who are of your own rank. "Condescend to men of low estate;" not as if you were going down to them, carrying all your pride with you. Do not let them know that you condescend. Let them find you by their side, as it were, a companion; not a witness of their inferiority, not their critic and judge, but their companion. Recognize them as standing on a common ground of friendliness with you. Let them see that you feel there are common bonds of brotherhood which bind all classes to each other —the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the fortunate and the unfortunate. Act toward them according to those principles of Christian manhood which are repeatedly laid down in Scripture, and which every one of us should seek to observe.

In the East, salutations are carried to an extent which is mischievous. That is the reason why, when the apostles were sent forth, our Master said, "Salute no man by the way." It was the custom there, first to have the opening salutation; then to have a response to that; then to have a stately rejoinder to that; and then to have a re-rejoinder upon that; and it takes a man half an hour to go through these preliminary salutations. When the apostles went out, they were to waste no time in such ceremonies, which were clearly excessive.

But *we* are in no great danger of carrying the ceremony of salutation to excess. It befits us, therefore, to take heed how we minify even the few salutations which we have. *Good-bye* is all we have left of *God be with you;* for men are ashamed any longer to use that. Instead of the grand salutation *God be with you,* you shall hear men who are parting from each other say, "Well, old fellow, take care of yourself!" Men are substituting a coarse way of greeting and saluting each other, instead of using those reverent, dignified, pleasure-giving, respect-inspiring salutations which belong to antiquity, and which should belong to every refined society—and to none so much as that which calls itself Christian.

I may mention, as connected with the same general topic of the use of the tongue, the habit of egotism and of boasting. I discuss it now, not on the side of folly, but simply on the side of ill manners. No man has a right to carry himself so that his attitude, his expression, his gestures, or his language, is an insult or an offense to any one. If I were to take some assafœtida, and saturate my garments with it, and move through crowded assemblies, everybody would say, not that I had violated any municipal or State law, but that I had violated the law of good conduct, the law of politeness, the law of kindness. No man has a right in any way to annoy men. No man has a right to thrust himself or his affairs forward in such a way that men are compelled to consider him or those affairs.

Egotism, within certain bounds, is proper and profitable. A man is supposed to know more about himself than anything else. Many times a man can speak more profitably about himself than about any one else. A whole evening may sometimes be spent to good advantage by one person, in recounting to a company the history of his travels or observations. A man may sometimes give an account of his personal experience, and not be regarded as guilty of egotism, in the offensive sense of that term. But such an overweening attention to one's self as obliges other persons to eat and drink him, as it were, wherever he goes—this is an offense to those

who are about him. And still more is this true when egotism is carried to the extent of boasting.

The father and mother tell the child not to boast, not to brawl, and it is good and wholesome counsel of the household; but it is also a part of the instruction of the Word of God. It is not only a matter of propriety in education, but it is a part of duty in religion. Egotism, in its bad sense, is a sin against God, because it is an offense to man. Boasting is a sin against God, because it is a violation of propriety, and introduces an element of discomfort into society, and not an element of quiet, of pleasure, or of profit.

The same is true of disputatiousness, or the incessant disposition of men to argue or dispute questions, and to make themselves critics of others.

The theme of the tongue is so rich, so various, that I might spend the whole evening, and scarcely touch the points of the topic. But I pass on to the consideration of another theme—namely, the duty of good manners. Men often speak of good manners as *an accomplishment.* I speak of them as *a duty.*

What, then, are good manners? Such manners as the usages of society have recognized as being agreeable to men. Such manners as take away rudeness, and remit to the brute creation all coarseness. There are a great many who feel that good manners are effeminate. They have a feeling that rude bluntness is a great deal more manly than good manners. It is a great deal more *beastly.* But when men are crowded in communities, the art of living together is no small art. How to diminish friction; how to promote ease of intercourse; how to make every part of a man's life contribute to the welfare and satisfaction of those around him; how to keep down offensive pride; how to banish the raspings of selfishness from the intercourse of men; how to move among men inspired by various and conflicting motives, and yet not have collisions—this is the function of good manners.

It is not effeminate to be refined. And in this land no man should plead inability. There may be a peasantry in other countries; there may be a class in foreign lands, who have no opportunities; there may be those whose toil is so continuous, whose opportunities for knowing what constitutes good manners are so few, and whose ignorance is so gross, that they are excusable; but this is not the case with any within the sound of my voice.

That a man is a mechanic, is no reason why he should not be a perfect gentleman. I affirm for every American citizen the right to be not simply a man, but a *good-mannered* man. I have seen men at the anvil who were as perfect gentlemen as men of books or

men of society. I know no reason why a man who tans hides should not be a gentleman. I know no reason why a man who digs in the soil, a man who works in metals and wood, a man who builds, should not be a perfect gentleman. There is nothing in mechanical occupations which is incompatible with the highest courtesy.

Paul was very much of a gentleman. Wherever he went he showed himself to be a perfect gentleman. The courtesy of his letters is without parallel. There are not in literature any such specimens of exquisite courtesy as are to be found in the letters of Paul.

Not only is the violation of good manners inexcusable on ordinary grounds, but it is sinful. When, therefore, parents and guardians and teachers would inspire the young with a desire for the manners of good society, it is not to be thought that they are accomplishments which may be accepted or rejected. Every man is bound to observe the laws of politeness.

True politeness is the spirit of benevolence showing itself in a refined way. I think that if *politeness* were substituted for *charity* in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians, it would not be inappropriately used:

"Politeness suffereth long, and is kind; politeness envieth not; politeness vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil" [and so on].

It is the expression of good-will and kindness. It promotes both beauty in the man who possesses it, and happiness in those who are about him. It is a religious duty, and should be a part of religious training.

There is a great deal of contempt expressed for what is called *etiquette* in society. Now and then there are elements of etiquette which perhaps might well be ridiculed; but in the main there is a just reason for all those customs which come under the head of *etiquette*. There is a reason which has regard to facility of intercourse. There is a reason in the avoidance of offense. There is a reason in comfort and happiness. And no man can afford to violate these unwritten customs of etiquette who wishes to act as a Christian gentleman.

I may speak, also, of a tendency which is bred by our institutions—the want of veneration. There are various ways in which this want of veneration shows itself. We often hear that there is not the same respect shown for the aged that there used to be. We know that there is very little respect shown for magistrates and men in authority. This is partly due, I think, to the institutions under which we live. One of the unfortunate effects derived from the

early stages of democratic training is the sense of personal sovereignty; the feeling that we stand on as high ground as anybody else. Under monarchical institutions men are taught to revere the great and glorious in government. The feeling of reverence does not prevail to any great extent among us. I discern a great lack in this respect. Children, now-a-days, are brought up to be pert, to be saucy, to be almost without restraint. They are brought up to have very little regard either for their parents or for their superiors. And, although there are a great many Christian households where children are rightly bred in this regard, it seems to me there has been a decay of that instruction which used to prevail, the tendency of which was to make children modest and respectful. We bring up our children to be old, and smart, and impertinent.

I discern, too, in the intercourse of society, that there is not so much respect paid to woman as is befitting. There is never any cause of complaint concerning the treatment of a woman if she be beautiful. Oh no! there is no trouble then. I have seen young men spring from their seats to make room for a fair and accomplished person. And yet, I have seen a weary working woman, laden with bundles containing the necessaries of life, stand and look wistfully for a seat, when no man cared to rise for her. I have seen a mother dragged down by nourishing her child, and carrying it, ill-clad, homely, even scrawny, and nobody was eager or anxious to do reverence to her. We pay great respect to taste and beauty, but very little to womanhood, independent of external conditions. There are a great many young men who will bear to have much more said to them on this subject, than has been said to them by their fathers or mothers or teachers.

I think every right-minded man is pained to receive respect from persons who show that they pay it to him by reason of his rank and public reputation, while they deny it to those who have no such advantages as he enjoys.

This courtesy which carries with it respect; this testimony of veneration to the aged; this yielding one's self in a thousand little society rites for the sake of making others happy—oh, what brightness it gives to life! What beauty, what adornment, it gives to Christian character!

There are many other points that I might speak of. The effect of punctuality and order; the relations which men sustain to each other's convenience and necessities—these, and a hundred other branches of this subject, I might discourse upon; but it is not necessary that I should go into them. I have given such examples

as I have, merely as specimens, for the purpose of calling your attention to the minuteness and carefulness with which the Scripture inculcates these things. It enjoins not merely the right spirit, but the right spirit manifested in the most beautiful way.

Take, for instance, liberality. It is not enough to be simply liberal. "Let him that giveth"—what? swell, and crow, and boast? Oh, no. "Let him that giveth do it with simplicity," says Paul to the Romans. In another place he says, "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver"—not one that gives "grudgingly or of necessity." When men give, they are to give willingly, with the right feeling; and not simply with the right feeling, but with the right feeling in its most beautiful form. We are not simply to perform duties, but we are to perform them in the ways that are most pleasant to others.

"Whatsoever things are of good report"—that is, the things which society has learned to regard as beautiful, useful, and pleasure-bearing—these are enjoined. Whatsoever you do in word or in deed, do all to the glory of God. Serve God in these little things, for the sum of them is greater than any single great thing. Here and there are men who are permitted to show their heroism in some great deed; but it is in little things that we are to show our heroism. We speak, we act, we walk, we meet men, and we are with men; and we have ten thousand opportunities for doing good; and if we but have happiness within, and the power of making happiness through thought, through emotion, through cheerfulness, through hopefulness, through courage, through mirth, what benefactors may we be, strewing life with ten thousand blessings, which cost us but little, and enable us to confer joy and comfort upon others!

Read the closing chapters of almost every one of the epistles; read Paul's letters to Titus; read the closing parts of his letters to Timothy; read the last chapters of Romans, of Philippians, of Colossians, and of Thessalonians; and see how he brings his teachings to a point in regard to these minute particulars of man's every-day life. See how much they are insisted upon and required as a part of Christian living, as well as of Christian disposition.

Now, a man may be polite, may be courteous, may observe all etiquette, may guard his tongue, and yet not be a Christian; or, peradventure, a man may be a Christian and fail in all these: but the ideal of a Christian man is one who, while he has faith and love toward God, has also benevolence toward men. Righteousness in word and deed, and graciousness toward our fellow-men—for these we are to seek, and labor, and pray, and watch.

When men become Christians, one of the first questions they should ask themselves is, "Now, what am I to do?" Here is a person that has been brought up in wealth and refinement—in a household where he has been taught every virtue; and being converted, and joining the church, the first thing he does is to ask himself, "What shall I do?" He thinks of mission schools, of distributing tracts, or of some self-denial, he scarcely knows what. I say to every such person, Be beautiful. How shall he do it? By putting on airs, peacock-like? No; by employing every power which God has given him in a spirit of benevolence. If you have education, if you are endowed with talents in any direction, there is in you a latent force by which you may bring happiness upon others. In meekness, in gentleness, in sweetness of temper, make your brothers and sisters happier. Fill the hearts of your parents with a more generous pride for you. See that you recognize and treat all as worthy of your consideration. Pay respect to the low. Manifest toward those who are about you sympathy and humility. Manifest moral beauty in conduct and life. Let your Christian feeling overflow in ten thousand forms of beautiful action.

This is my duty; it is your duty; it is everybody's duty; it is the duty of children at school and at home; it is a duty that belongs to Christian life under all circumstances. We are to exhibit those traits which give joy and brightness every day, wherever we are. Self-denial is to be practiced in those ten thousand little things in which you forego your own desires in order to confer happiness on others. And in their joy you will find yourself paid a thousand-fold.

"Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Or, according to the language of our text,

"Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

We draw near to thee, our Father, encouraged by the memory of thy past goodness to us. We remember the hours of trouble in which we have sought thee, and found rest and comfort. Thou hast taught us, by experience, to put our trust in thee, as in a Father who pities us, and knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust. We draw near to thee as to a merciful High-priest, touched with a feeling of our infirmities, in all points tempted as we have been, and yet without sin, and able to succor those who are tempted. We rejoice that thou hast borne our sin, and carried our sorrow. The chastisement of our peace has been upon thee. By thy stripes we are healed.

We cannot enter into the greatness of the meaning, we cannot understand the fullness, of all that which thou hast borne for us. Thine interposition, thy mediation, thy fore-running and thy solicitation for us in the heavenly realm, we cannot understand. We believe the great and glorious truth, the fringe, the skirts, the beginnings of which we discern; but we cannot understand all the fullness, all the richness, all the joy and all the blessedness of the truth of thy love and care, of thy pardoning power, and of thine atoning work.

We rejoice in thee; and though by searching we cannot find thee out, so far as our dull thought rises it is light; it is joy; it is blessed sympathy; it is help full of hope and full of strength for the weak and the failing. Be gracious, we beseech of thee, this evening, to all who are gathered into thy presence. May they have opened to them the door of hope, that they may discern in God their personal Friend. May they not stand afar off, afraid. May they not, by reason of their conscious sinfulness, be kept from thee. May they know that thy heart is the universal remedy; that in that is breath; and that it is thy nature to impart it to those who need it. In thee is everlasting strength for those who are weak and ready to perish. Thou didst open prison doors. Thou didst come to break bonds and shackles, to bring forth those who are imprisoned, and to give them light and liberty. Thou didst come to release those who are in bondage, and make them free—yes, sons of God.

We pray that every one in thy presence may find himself borne toward this beautiful God. In thee may we put our trust. On thee all our hopes do rest. We are poor; we are ignorant; we are simple; we are needy. With every infirmity we press our way through life. Give us to feel the effulgence, the amplitude, the richness and the glory of thy nature. And may we, to-night, hear thee calling us as sons of God, heirs with Jesus Christ, to an eternal inheritance. So, we beseech of thee, may every heart have the greatest blessing which can be given—the faith of God, the sense of the divine presence, of relationship and of strength, imported from the divine hand to us.

Bless, we pray thee, all those who are near to us. Remember those who are separated from us, and scattered far away. Remember any that are dear to us who are on the sea, and any who are in foreign lands. Remember those who are in the wilderness, and those who in thy providence are dispersed upon the errands of life everywhither. We thank thee that there is no distance in thy thought. All are before thee.

Take care, not only of those who are dear to us, but of us. We pray thee that more and more we may know how to hold ourselves sanctified, with our affection one toward another on the one side, and with the consciousness of human infirmity on the other, and with a foresight of thy glorious perfection, toward which all of us are hastening.

We pray that thou wilt cheer any who are despondent, strengthen any who are ready to perish. Withdraw the power of temptation from those who are overmatched. Break and lead away from their sins any who are led captive thereby.

We pray that thou wilt more and more make thy truth a word of power. More and more may it be as a sword of the Spirit.

And we pray that thy kingdom may come in the hearts of this congregation. In this church, and in all the churches of this city, wilt thou unite thy people with more and more fervor and zeal and activity in doing good. And we pray that thou wilt help every one so to adorn himself in all virtue, in all manliness, in the beauty of holiness, that men, seeing them, shall glorify their Father which is in heaven.

Prepare us, we beseech thee, for the duties of the week which now comes near to us. Prepare us with patience and with gentleness. Give us endurance as good soldiers. May our faith never fail. May our courage never faint. May we never be weary in well-doing. May we overflow, filled with the bounty of God, as streams that the mountains feed; and from us may that bounty flow out to others. And in thy mercy and goodness wilt thou take us at last, when we have finished our earthly career, to thy spirit-land, where we shall understand as we are understood; where we shall know as we are known; where we shall be as the angels of God.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt teach us to go to thy Word for the rules of our life, not only to know what are its truths, but that we may learn how to carry them out in all the particulars of our thought, our will, our conduct, our associations one with another; that we may learn how to honor thee in speech, in silence, in helping each other, in edifying one another, in pleasing each other, and in removing the thorns and snares which lie so thickly in human life, in learning how we may spread abroad kindness, and gentleness, and meekness, and humbleness of mind, among our fellow-men. We pray that thou wilt give us the light of thy Spirit and the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, that the fruit of the Spirit may be in us, and that we may bring it forth abundantly.

Bless us when we sing again to thy praise. Go home with us. Make our homes more and more radiant with the true Spirit of Christ. And bring us at last to our heavenly home, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*

PLYMOUTH PULPIT.

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